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MEMORANDUM FOR: Special Coordinating Committee
FROM: Director of Central Intelligence
SUBJECT: Report of Interdepartmental Working Group
on Paramilitary Requirements

1. In reviewing the Study which is being forwarded to the SCC on Paramilitary Capabilities, I think it essential to bear in mind that the Study implicitly limits the United States to a covert paramilitary assistance and eschews a covert paramilitary action capability. I believe this very much fits the tenor of the times. I also believe that this is a watershed decision which should not be taken lightly. We should ask ourselves whether the times ahead of us might require the United States to move covertly with paramilitary forces. There are two conditions under which this might be desirable, in my view:

a. Circumstances in which the delicacy of the operation requires the utmost covertness by the paramilitary forces as they seek out and approach the target.

b. Circumstances in which the United States would want to be able to "cover its tracks" and not ever be forced to acknowledge its covert paramilitary activities.

It seems to me that either of these circumstances is most likely to arise in conjunction with some form of terrorism, be it possession of a nuclear weapon by a terrorist group or the holding of hostages by such a group or other forms of extortion. It is my personal opinion that the country should

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be prepared for both types of covert paramilitary action. I do not have an opinion as to whether these capabilities could and should be developed within DOD or CIA. The Study speaks of a "quick strike" capability in DOD but it finds that it would always be overt. The issue, then, is whether DOD should also develop covert capabilities in the two directions mentioned above; or whether the CIA should develop them. There would be considerable problems for DOD to develop a fully covert capability; there would be considerable problems for CIA to maintain a large enough and broad enough spectrum of such paramilitary action capability and to put ~~AT~~ risk in actual operations ~~and~~ its personnel ^{who possess} ~~with~~ knowledge of sensitive intelligence activities. I recommend the SCC address the basic issue of whether we want the two types of covert paramilitary action mentioned above and, if such is the case and if one or the other or both is desired, a further study be made as to how these capabilities would be best achieved.

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